

SENATE RESOLUTION  
8650

By Senators Kastama, Fairley, Fraser, Kohl-Welles, McCaslin, Roach, Spanel and Thibaudeau

WHEREAS, The Hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection is the most common chronic bloodborne viral infection and the leading cause of known liver disease in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Often the virus does not cause any symptoms or signs when first transmitted, a person can be symptom free for 10 to 20 years, and because of this, many individuals are not aware of their infection; and

WHEREAS, Of those infected, 85 to 90 percent develop a chronic infection; and

WHEREAS, The Center for Disease Control recognizes 1.8 percent of the noninstitutionalized population to be infected. Based on this percentage Washington state has 106,000 citizens infected; and

WHEREAS, The virus is transmitted primarily through exposure to infected blood, such as blood transfusion, injection drug use, solid organ transplantation from infected donors, unsafe medical practices, occupational exposure to infected blood, birth to an infected mother, multiple heterosexual partners, high-risk sexual practices, tattooing, and body piercing; and

WHEREAS, Populations assumed to have high rates of infection are people who were transfused or used blood products, veterans, prison population, those who used or are using I.V. drugs, the foreign born population, and those whose occupations put them in contact with blood or bodily fluids; and

WHEREAS, There is no vaccine and no cure; and

WHEREAS, Through education we can find those infected, teach them how to slow the progression of the virus through lifestyle changes, slowing the need for liver transplant in those who will progress to that level, and teach those infected how not to spread the virus; and

WHEREAS, Education is the most cost-effective form of prevention; and

WHEREAS, The Governor has proclaimed March 24, 2003, as Hepatitis C Awareness Day;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Senate join in honoring both the victims of the diseases and those fighting for a cure on March 24th, Hepatitis C Awareness Day; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be immediately transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to the Governor and to the University of Washington, the Hepatitis Education Project, the American Liver Foundation, and the Washington State Health Department.

I, Milton H. Doumit, Jr., Secretary of the Senate,  
do hereby certify that this is a true and  
correct copy of Senate Resolution 8650,  
adopted by the Senate  
March 26, 2003

MILTON H. DOUMIT, JR.  
Secretary of the Senate